

GRANT

Partners for Equal Care

Tower Cancer Research Foundation Grants the Research Center for Health Equity at Cedars-Sinai Cancer to address cancer disparities in LGBTQ+ communities of Southern California

A new partnership between the Research Center for Health Equity at Cedars-Sinai Cancer and Tower Cancer Research Foundation will address cancer-related inequities in the LGBTQ+ communities of Southern California.

There is clear evidence that cancer disparities exist in the LGBTQ+ communities, and especially among racial and ethnic minorities, those with low socioeconomic status, the uninsured and the underinsured, who experience higher cancer incidence, advanced stage of disease at diagnosis, and worse survival outcomes.

Cancers that affect this community disproportionately include Human Papilloma Virus-related cancers such as anal, cervical, head and neck cancers. The almost-double rates of smoking within the LGBTQ+ community contributes to higher lung cancer rates. Queer women experience an elevated risk of breast cancer, largely due to being overweight, and higher smoking and drinking rates.

These factors become far more dangerous when as high as 30% of LGBTQ+ adults do not seek health care services, in comparison with 10% of age-matched heterosexual people. LGBTQ+ adults who do not regularly seek health care services and



prevention reduce their chances of early detection and ultimately surviving cancers. Our program aims to reverse these inequities.

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Tower Cancer Research Foundation has provided a \$50,000 grant for a targeted outreach, education and access program in 2019 to provide effective education, workshops and screening to the most vulnerable LGBTQ+ populations in the Los Angeles area: African American,

Latinx/Hispanic, Middle Eastern, Asian, Pacific Islander and immigrants.

Effective, tailored approaches are currently being developed by engaging community members in the planning and implementation of strategies as intersectional identities further impact inequities.

Zul Surani, Administrator for Community Outreach and Engagement at Cedars-Sinai Cancer, confirmed that "a series of activities, events and outreach efforts are currently being rolled out throughout the city to reach those most in need with tailored cancer information and access to free and low-cost screening services. We are grateful to Tower Cancer Research Foundation for their vision of inclusive cancer care for the LGBTQ+ communities and for their support."